

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 PURPOSE

This Procedures Manual has been prepared to aid California local agencies scope, organize, design, construct and maintain their public transportation facilities when they seek Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded Federal-aid or State funding. The manual describes the processes, procedures, documents, authorizations, approvals and certifications which are required in order to receive Federal-aid and/or State funds for many types of local transportation projects.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The manual is a compilation and summary of information from many sources including Federal and State law, regulations, guidelines and operating practices. It reflects the procedures and practices developed over many years of providing Federal-aid funding and State funding for local projects. These practices and procedures have been modified many times, most recently for changes made by the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), SB 300/AB 471 (the 1989 State transportation blueprint legislation), and the 1995 Caltrans reengineering of the local assistance procedures.

The general thrust of the changes under the above legislation and reengineering has been to provide the local agency with broad delegation, latitude and responsibility for developing its projects. However, under Title 23, United States Code, Caltrans is responsible for the administration of Federal-aid (FHWA funded) transportation projects in California and cannot delegate this overall administrative responsibility.

This manual in conjunction with the *Local Assistance Program Guidelines* supersedes the *Local Programs Manual, Volume I*, "Project Processing Procedures," and *Volume II*, "Contract Administration Procedure."

1.3 RELATED MANUALS

The *Local Assistance Program Guidelines* describes each of the Federal-aid and State-aid local assistance programs and the requirements for obtaining project funding for these individual programs.

The *Local Programs Manual Volume III* (Environmental Procedures) provides technical details for specific actions or activities required for the environmental process.

The *Procedures Manual for Special Funded Programs* provides guidance to local agencies and the private sector on the process and procedures for developing special funded projects constructed on the State highway system. Special funds include those derived from local sales tax measures, development impact fees and private sources.

For local agency projects on the State highway system, Caltrans *Project Development Procedures Manual* shall be used. It describes the process and procedures for developing State system projects. It also contains discussions of the regional and State planning and programming processes.

Caltrans Local Programs guidebooks provide brief overviews of a specific program or project development phase or procedure. They remain a good quick reference and will be updated to conform to this manual. In the meantime, if there are conflicts between the practices shown in the guidebooks and this manual, this manual shall prevail.

Other State and Federal manuals and documents, including those noted as references, should be consulted for specific guidance in developing a project. Pertinent documents can be accessed through the Local Programs Home Page on the Internet at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/>.

1.4 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- Administering Agency - The State or a City, County, other public agency, or nonprofit organizations, that advertises, opens bids, awards and administers the contract. They are frequently called local agency or agency and were previously called responsible agency.
- Consultant - A private individual, corporation or other business organization that may be selected to provide architectural, engineering, environmental, or other related technical services for a local agency project.
- Department of Transportation - The Department of Transportation of the State of California, as created by law; also referred to as the Department, State, or Caltrans.
- District - A subdivision of the Department organized to administer the affairs of the Department for a specific geographical area and for the local agencies in that area (see Exhibit 2-A).
- DLAE - The District Local Assistance Engineer; The individual in each district responsible for providing services and assistance to the local agencies.
- Federal-aid - As used in this manual, refers to Federal funds provided for the development of surface transportation and administered by the FHWA. Generally, these funds are derived from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, Title 1, Surface Transportation. It also includes FHWA administered funds from previous acts frequently titled Highway Acts.
- FHWA - Federal Highway Administration; The Federal agency responsible for administering the Federal-aid Highway Program.
- FTIP - Federal Transportation Improvement Program; A three year list of all transportation projects proposed for Federal surface transportation funding within the planning area of one of the fifteen Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the State. These are only valid for reference when incorporated into the FTIP and approved by FHWA/FTA (see Chapter 4 of the Caltrans *Project Development Procedures Manual* for more discussion).

- FSTIP - Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program; A three year list of all State and local transportation projects proposed for Federal surface transportation funding with the State. This is developed by Caltrans with cooperation of the MPOs and in consultation with the local non-urbanized government. The FSTIP includes the FTIPs, which are incorporated by reference and other rural federally funded projects. The FSTIP, including incorporated FTIPs is only valid for use after FHWA/FTA approval. See Chapter 4 of the Caltrans *Project Development Procedures Manual* for more discussion. Also see STIP below.
- FTA - Federal Transit Administration; The Federal agency responsible for administering the Federal transit program. Rules for the transit program are not covered in this manual (see Chapter 3, "Project Authorization," Section 3.3 for procedures for transferring Federal-aid funds from FHWA to FTA).
- Headquarters - The headquarters office of the Department located at 1120 "N" St., Sacramento, CA 95814.
- ISTEA - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. ISTEA is an act signed by the President on December 18, 1991 providing authorizations for the next 6 years for highways, highway safety, and mass transportation. For definition of the various programs established by this act, refer to the *Local Assistance Program Guidelines*.
- Local Agency - A California city, county, or other local public agency; In many instances this term is used loosely to include nonprofit organizations.
- NHS - National Highway System (see Chapter 2, "Roles and Responsibilities," Section 2.2).
- Phase - For the purposes of Federal-aid authorization, the development of a project is broken into stages or phases; Preliminary Engineering, Right of Way and Construction. Each of these phases must be individually authorized, usually at different times in the development of a project.
- Preliminary Engineering (PE) - This phase includes all project initiation and development activities undertaken after its inclusion in the approved FSTIP through the completion of PS&E. It may include preliminary Right of Way engineering and investigations necessary to complete the environmental document.
- Right of Way (R/W) - This phase includes the work necessary to appraise and acquire project right of way, relocate individuals or businesses, and revise or relocate utilities.
- Construction (Const.)/Construction Engineering (CE) - This phase includes the work of project advertising¹ through construction, preparation of as-built plans, and final estimates and payments. This phase must be authorized prior to advertising and CE must be separately identified in this authorization.

¹ CE includes advertising only if not included in PE phase and only after authorization date.

- OLP - Office of Local Programs; The office in Caltrans headquarters that is responsible for administering, managing, and implementing the Federal-aid Highway and State local assistance programs.
- S&H Code - California Streets and Highways Code; This code contains many of the laws governing funding and development of local streets and roads projects.
- STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program; A seven year list of projects proposed in RTIPs and the Proposed STIP that are approved and adopted by the California Transportation Commission (see Chapter 4 of the Caltrans *Project Development Procedures Manual* for more discussion).
- State funds - As used in this manual, includes the State funds provided to local agencies for specific transportation projects and programs administered by the Office of Local Programs. State funds are currently provided for the following projects: Flexible Congestion Relief (FCR), Transportation System Management (TSM), State-Local Transportation Partnership (STLPP), Bicycle Lane Account, Proposition 116: Bicycle Projects, Proposition 116: Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM), Federal Apportionment Exchange and State Match programs. The *Local Assistance Program Guidelines* further defines these programs.
- 23 USC - The section (Title 23) of the United States Code containing laws relating to highways.
- 23 CFR - The section (Title 23) of the Code of Federal Regulations containing regulations (general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register) relating to highways. Not included are regulations based on Civil Rights requirements in Title 49, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Policies, and other Federal laws and regulations as described in this manual.

1.5 MANUAL ORGANIZATION

The manual is divided into 20 chapters. Each chapter describes a process and procedure step important to the development of a local assistance project. Projects may not need to fulfill each process to be successfully implemented and to be eligible for Federal or State funding, but each should be considered.

FEDERAL-AID PROJECTS

Federal-aid projects require consideration of the processes described in each chapter in this manual. For these projects, each chapter should be reviewed to determine whether the actions, activities and decisions required are applicable to the individual project.

Some State programs, e.g., Flexible Congestion Relief (FCR) and Transportation System Management (TSM), may use Federal funds allocated to the State for implementation. Projects thus funded, must follow the full Federal-aid process.

The *Local Assistance Program Guidelines* further defines these programs.

Flow Chart 1-1 outlines the Federal-aid project process and references the associated chapters. This chart is not intended to represent the actual chronological sequence of Federal-aid implementation.

STATE FUNDED PROJECTS

Projects seeking only State funds require less oversight and review than those seeking Federal-aid funds. Not all of the processes described in the chapters of this manual apply to these projects. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 17 and 19 apply in whole or in part to these projects.

The *Local Assistance Program Guidelines* further defines these programs.

Flow Chart 1-2 highlights the actions needed for State funded projects.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

The chapters are generally in chronological sequence when developing a project, however, some of the procedures can be done concurrently or must be repeated for the next phase of a project. The flow charts in the exhibits for this chapter define the general relationship between the processes. The flow charts at the beginning of most chapters further define the relationships between these processes and procedures.

Chapter 2, “Roles and Responsibilities,” defines the roles and responsibilities for the various entities involved in developing a local assistance project.

Chapter 3, “Project Authorization,” describes the process to obtain project authorization and fund obligation required for each phase of a Federal-aid project. It also discusses the Federal policy concerning funding projects at less than the full allowable Federal share (underfunding), transferring funds to FTA and the CTC fund allocation vote process.

Chapter 4, “Agreements,” describes the agreements needed between the local agency and the State and between the State and FHWA to obtain reimbursement of funds.

Chapter 5, “Accounting/Invoices,” describes the general accounting procedures necessary to receive reimbursement for work done in any phase of the project.

Chapters 6-8, “Environmental Procedures,” “Field Review,” and “Public Hearings,” discuss the project initiation and environmental procedures needed to bring a project to the stage at which the local agency decision makers commit the project to final design and implementation.

Chapters 9, “Disadvantaged Business Enterprises” (DBE), describes the requirements for establishing and reporting DBE program and project goals. This process may be necessary during the initial project stage or may not be required until a later phase.

Chapter 10, “Consultant Selection,” describes the requirements for selecting and hiring consultants to perform project activities.

Chapters 11 & 12, “Design Standards” and “Plans, Specifications, & Estimate,” describe the design standards to be used and the Plans, Specifications and Estimate development necessary to bring the project to the advertising and construction stage.

Chapters 13 & 14, “Right of Way” and “Utility Facilities,” describe the procedures used to acquire right of way or relocate utilities.

Chapters 15-17, "Advertise and Award Project," "Administer Construction Contracts," and "Project Completion," describe the procedures from advertising, through construction administration, project completion and completion of the final reports.

Chapter 18, "Maintenance," describes the ongoing maintenance responsibilities and activities needed to assure that the project remains a functional public asset and the related inspection and reporting requirements.

Chapter 19, "Process Reviews," describes the process reviews by which Caltrans and/or FHWA will make periodic checks to ensure that the agencies have complied with their commitments and certifications under Federal and State laws and regulations and these procedures.

Chapter 20, "Deficiencies and Sanctions," describes the course of action to be expected when local agencies fail to comply with State and Federal requirements during their project. An appeal process is available when district decisions or sanctions are not acceptable.

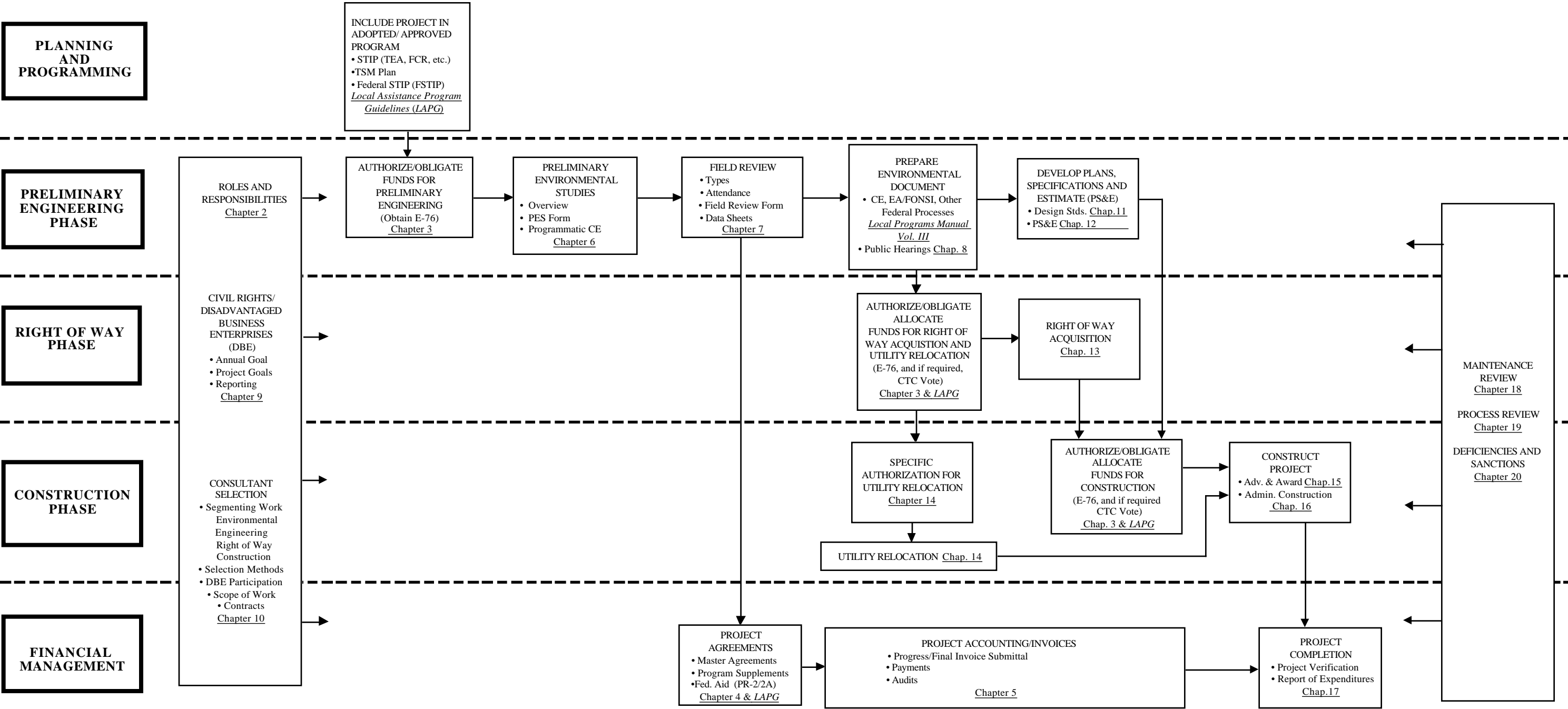
1.6 MANUAL UPDATES

This manual is being made available to each local agency in a printed format and is also available on the Internet. The Caltrans Web Server is at <http://www.dot.ca.gov>. The OLP Home Page is accessible through the Internet address at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/localprograms>. As updates are made, they will be available on the Internet and the agency will be responsible for obtaining its own printed copy if needed.

Comments and suggestions for improvement to the manual or the processes and procedures described herein are welcome. They may be submitted to:

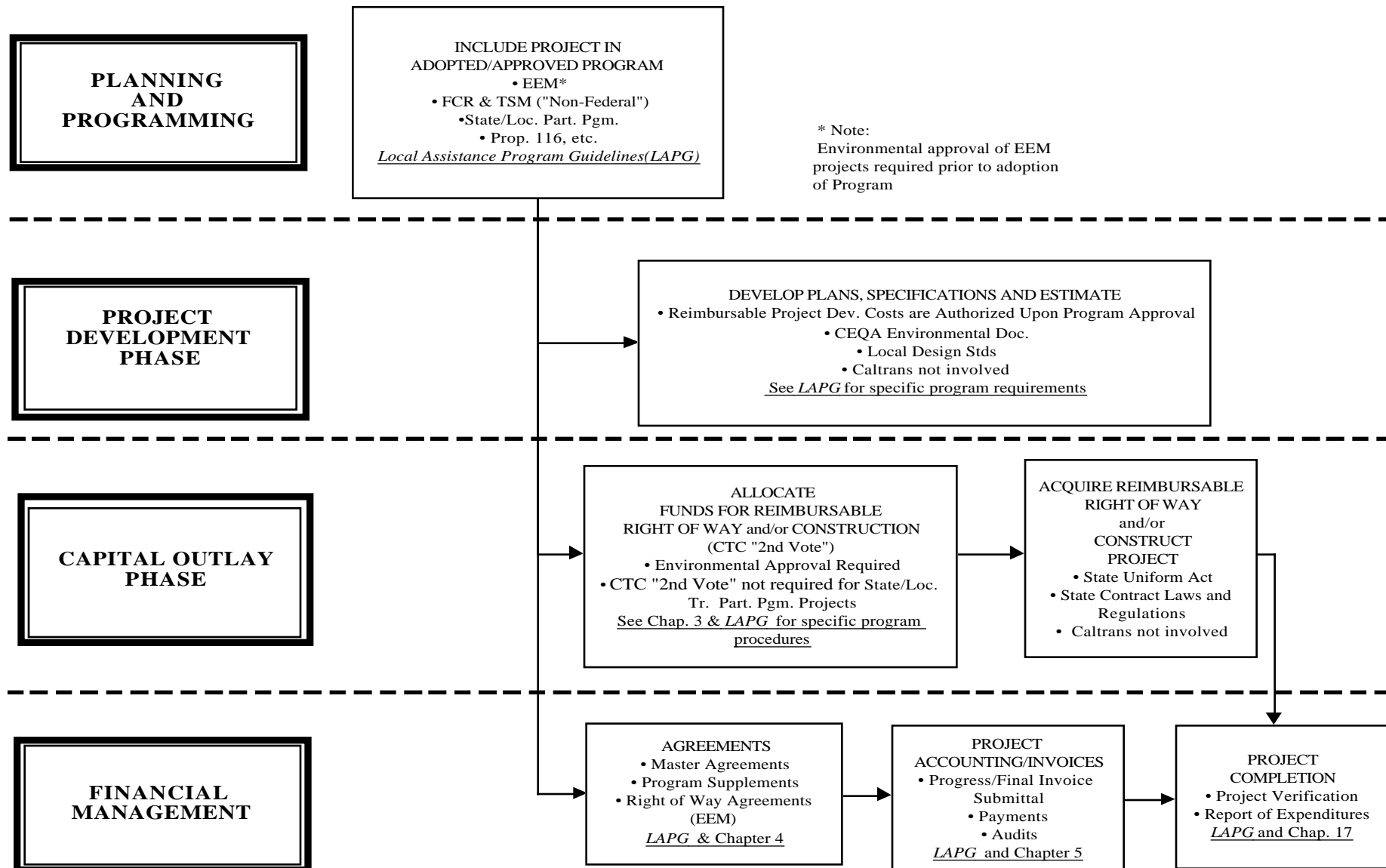
Department of Transportation
Office of Local Programs, Procedures Development
MS #1
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 94274-0001.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FLOW CHART
(TYPICAL PROCEDURES FOR FEDERAL-AID PROJECTS)



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PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FLOW CHART (TYPICAL PROCEDURES FOR "STATE ONLY" PROJECTS)



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